

hour and dollar spent in administering No Child Left Behind could be funneled instead into improving our schools.

Thirdly, A-PLUS Act will ensure that parents, schools and the States are held accountable for the education process. Rather than allowing oversight to rest in some far-flung bureaucracies here in Washington, it will be right at home here in your local school district. But most importantly, giving States the freedom to keep their education dollars in oversight within their own State is exactly what our Founding Fathers originally intended.

James Madison, often considered the father of the Constitution, will be remembered this coming Friday, March 16, on the 250th anniversary of his birth.

In a way, Madison predicted this situation we now find ourselves in, when he wrote, "In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself."

It is time for us to explain why we are not controlling ourselves. Our Founding Fathers deliberately wrote a Constitution of enumerated specific powers. While some countries have attempted to limit government by writing Constitutions that specify every single thing and every single line, our government Constitution does not do that. Therefore, in Article I, Section 8, the founders specifically listed congressional powers, and in the 10th amendment grants that all other legislative powers are in the hands of States or the people respectively.

So, in essence, it makes sense that Congress should perform duties only prescribed by the Constitution. When you think about it, the United States has thrived as a nation precisely because the freedom of the people has been protected by a limited government. The Constitution is the anchor that protects American citizens from the storms of a controlling central government.

James Madison wrote also in *The Federalist* No. 45, "The powers delegated by the proposed Constitution to the Federal Government are few and defined." He would add, probably, that education is not one of them. So Mr. HOEKSTRA's common-sense legislation follows Madison's insights by ensuring that the States have the opportunity to retain control over their own education dollars. Doing so will not only improve the quality of the education system, but will help return our Nation to the principles of limited government, federalism, and the 10th amendment.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SHORT SEA SHIPPING PROMOTION ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, when I assumed the chairmanship of the Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation at the beginning of the 110th Congress, I promised that the subcommittee would balance oversight of the Coast Guard with our responsibility to strengthen maritime transportation.

On February 15, the subcommittee began to fulfill that promise by holding a hearing on short sea shipping, which is the waterborne transportation of goods and people from one domestic port in the United States to another port in the United States or between Canada and the U.S.

At the present time, trucks carry nearly 70 percent of the freight tonnage transported in the United States. By contrast, the most highly developed water freight transportation routes in the United States, those running on the Mississippi River, the Great Lakes and the Saint Lawrence Seaway carry just 13 percent of the freight tonnage within the United States.

Mr. Speaker, the impact of our continued reliance on trucks to move freight will be measured in increased traffic congestion, increases in polluting emissions and increases in accidents between trucks and cars.

However, the only way that we will shift freight transportation away from an increasing volume of trucks is by creating affordable reliable transportation alternatives. I believe that one of these alternatives must be short sea shipping.

During our February hearing, our subcommittee heard compelling testimony arguing that one of the challenges currently limiting the growth of short sea shipping is a requirement that with only a few exceptions cargo transported by water to a port in the United States must pay the harbor maintenance tax. This tax, assessed at the rate of \$125 per \$100,000 of cargo value adds to the costs associated with waterborne transportation and is one factor currently making such transportation less competitive than trucks and other modes.

Importantly, if the cargo originated in Europe and is off-loaded in New York, just to be reloaded on a ship bound for Jacksonville, Florida then the cargo owner must pay the harbor tax twice.

□ 1500

Further, the tax is paid, not by the ship owner, but by the shipper of the goods. So imagine that a FedEx truck wants to get on a ferry in Windsor, Canada, and be off loaded just across the river in Detroit, Michigan. Each of the owners of the 500 packages that are in the truck must pay the harbor maintenance tax. There is simply no easy way to collect the tax from so many different packages, so the truck travels to the United States across the bridge.

In part, because it acts to limit the growth of short sea shipping, the har-

bor maintenance tax generates only about \$2 million per year in revenue from short sea shipping voyages, but stands as a costly barrier to the expansion of short sea shipping options.

Today, therefore, I have introduced the Short Sea Shipping Promotion Act of 2007, which would exempt goods moved by water from one port in the United States to another port in the United States or between the United States and Canada from the harbor maintenance tax.

This exemption will not significantly reduce revenues into the harbor maintenance trust fund, which already has a significant fund balance, but could help open a significant new course for the movement of freight by water.

Our Nation urgently needs to take practical steps to address the significant challenges we face in maintaining the flow of freight on which our economy depends.

As chairman of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee, the measure I have introduced today is just the first step of a concerted and deliberate effort I will undertake to support the potential of maritime transportation, in general, and short sea shipping, in particular, to be a reliable, cost-effective mode in our national transportation network.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

A-PLUS ACT (NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND REFORM)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address important changes to the No Child Left Behind Act. I recently held a roundtable discussion on this issue with my constituents from all over the Fifth District held in Forsyth County, North Carolina. It was a great opportunity for me to hear from superintendents, board of education members, principals and teachers from across the district about their concerns with No Child Left Behind and their recommendations for program improvements.

As a member of the House Committee on Education and Labor, it was important for me to hear firsthand what educators believe is working and is not working in No Child Left Behind.

One of the main concerns brought to me during this roundtable was the role that special education students play in the Federal oversight process. Due to the wide-ranging needs and challenges faced by special needs students, it is becoming increasingly difficult for schools to meet Federal standards.